

# One Minute with the Editor

## Last Call for Amateur Detectives

**I**F you have solved the mystery of Mrs. Fisher's murder, now is the time to mail your solution. All contest letters must reach us by November 6; and our letter-carrier says he is mighty glad of it.

## There's a Story by Her Next Week

**DEAR EDITOR:** Among all the stories that appear in the magazines, none please me more than the stories of Gertrude Brooke Hamilton. I want to thank you for publishing "The Doll Baby." Give us another story by Miss Hamilton soon.

## Just What We're Aiming For

**DEAR EDITOR:** My father, who is a very cultured old gentleman, reads one kind of magazine; my chauffeur, who isn't cultured at all, reads a very different kind. But last week I caught them both reading *your* magazine. How do you account for that?

## Coming Soon

**"TAKING Title to Your Property"**—an article telling you what to look out for when you buy a home—by William Hamilton Osborne, who wrote "How to Make Your Will."

## Walt Mason Introduces Himself

*This is Walt Mason, who lives in a big brick house in Emporia, Kansas—the only house in the world paid for by poetry. As Walt is to write for us every week, we have asked him to introduce himself in rhyme.*



**T**HIS isn't Pegasus, you know. No pinions on his shoulders grow. He doesn't need a pair of wings, or any such contorted things; he doesn't soar above the crowds, or try to navigate the clouds; he sticks to earth, as you may see, in which the steed resembles me.

And since we stick to common things, without a wish to soar on wings, contented with the mundane street, the both of us have lots to eat.

The Pegasus of nobler bards is seldom loaded to the guards with wholesome hay and luscious oats; he has to rustle with the goats for old tin cans and circus bills, the while my wingless charger fills his works with greens and corn and rye, and waxes fat—as fat as I.

## Can Baldness Be Avoided?

By EDWIN F. BOWERS, M.D.

**I**S there any way by which I can prevent my hair from departing untimely? My father and grandfather were completely bald at forty, and I greatly dread a like fate.

Of all the causes of baldness, possibly the most common is lack of fat-headedness. For to have a comfortably thick layer of fat between the bony tables of the skull and the scalp gives a firm foundation for the roots of the hair (the follicles), and permits a circulation and a degree of nutrition of these hair roots not otherwise possible.

If one has an ancestral tendency to a "tight scalp," there is every likelihood that ultimately he will follow in the hirsute steps of his ancestors. And nothing much can be done to prevent it—more's the pity.

However, everything that will encourage the circulation of blood and the better nutrition of the hair follicles should be attempted. Chief of these is massage with the finger-tips—gently loosening the

scalp by moving it backward and forward, thereby keeping it from becoming hide-bound. Olive oil, or some of the bland vegetable oils, rubbed carefully into the scalp, is most helpful to this end.

Always great care should be taken not to use too much force upon young and tender hair shoots that may be coming up under intensive cultivation. Otherwise, these may be torn loose from their delicate fastenings.

Dandruff is also a common cause of baldness, for it may ultimately produce complete atrophy (or shrinking) of the hair follicles. And when the hair bulbs are shrunk or obliterated, there is no longer any hope of bringing nutrition to the hair they supply. A recent article in this magazine described the course to be pursued in this condition. Cleanliness is indispensable in threatened baldness. The so-called "tonics"—except as they contribute to cleanliness and a mild degree of stimulation or irritation—are chiefly valuable for their refreshing odor and pretty

color. For if "tonics" could cure baldness, there would be no bald-headed doctors or barbers; and the most casual observation teaches us that there are any number of both. A moderately stiff pair of military brushes, and a reasonable amount of industry in using them, is one of the most effective hair tonics.

If the scalp is dry, it is good common sense to feed it with some readily absorbed oil. Care should be taken also in the selection of soaps; for any soap with a strongly alkaline base is likely to cause a dry, harsh condition of the scalp, and thereby deprive the hair roots of a proportion of their indispensable fatty food.

That form of baldness resulting from wasting diseases or fevers is usually only transitory. The explanation for this form

of alopecia is that fever burns fat—including the layer of fat between the scalp and the skull. When the normal condition of fatness is again restored the hair comes back, and flourishes almost as luxuriantly as it did before. Everything that can be done to bring about this normal condition is helpful to hair.

Worry and nervousness, by interfering with the function of nutrition, contribute frequently to baldness. Mental science is an admirable corrective for this variety of hair loss.

On the whole, baldness is a much more serious esthetic than physical loss. And by taking thought of these matters we may, at the same time, take heart. For there are many worse things in life than merely being bald-headed.

## How Can I Finance My Invention?

By ALBERT W. ATWOOD

**I**HAVE a sound, legitimate proposition, protected by several patents," writes a man who is evidently an inventor, and whose initials are J. G. "My resources being exhausted, I can not obtain the small capital required to exploit the business. A few schemers and promoters have tried hard to get hold of the proposition, but I have always managed to slip out of their clutches. Would you be good enough to advise me how to connect with an investor?"

About the hardest thing I know anything about is to market and finance a new invention. The great difficulty is that the majority of new devices are not commercially practical; that is, they will not earn profits without the expenditure of enormous capital, and usually not even then. Several years ago the government had granted more than a million patents, and, although it is the avowed purpose of the Patent Office to refuse grants for inventions that are apparently of no practical usefulness, yet the million patents included many of the most foolish nature.

### The Rotary Shoe Heel

**O**NE man who invented a rotary shoe heel—the idea being to prevent the back part of the heel from wearing down first, refused to get a patent at all, because he said no one else could ever have thought of such a boon to humanity. Inquiry showed that a whole subdivision of the Patent Office was already given over to rotary shoe heels. Another man patented a device to keep horses from balking by giving them an electrical shock. Then, too, so many inventors go out of their own line. A farmer who had never been beyond his own county invented a fire-escape for skyscrapers.

There have been only a few Bells and Edisons. The average inventor who makes a moderate fortune turns out improvements, attachments, and small changes that make an object practical and conform to already settled trade requirements. A design or invention which is different beyond a certain point is usually, from the business and financial as well as popular view, a "freak," regardless of merit, and the wise manufacturer gradually approaches it with one slight change after another, whereas the true inventor wants to revolutionize the whole industry at once. The only test is, will it pay?

A man who has thirty patents to his record once admitted that only five of them had proved successful. Capitalists and promoters in good standing are hard to interest, because they know only too well how few new inventions will prove commercially successful. Of course, the man who asks the question at the head of this article believes that his "proposition" will prove a commercial success; but all the burden of proof is upon him. Capitalists know that the majority of claims such as he makes are not sustained by sound business considerations. He must work against a dead wall of prejudice—and rightly too, because the investment of money must be governed by averages and

general experience, not by the exceptional case.

There are three general methods of financing an invention. 1. Sell outright to some firm in the same or a similar field. 2. Effect a royalty, lease, or licensing arrangement with some manufacturer in a similar line. 3. Form a company yourself and sell stock. Experts differ as to whether the first or the second method is the better from the inventor's point of view. In the long run, the simplest and surest way is to sell outright. The trouble with this method is that inventors rarely receive more than a pittance. On the other hand, the man who tries to keep most of the benefit himself often wastes years in vain attempts to make satisfactory arrangements.

I can not tell the man whose letter inspired this article to whom to sell his invention, or what firm to approach with a view to manufacturing it on a royalty basis, without knowing the nature of the article, and that is something which he does not mention in his letter. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, if a man has a really useful improvement on some present device or method, a real money-saver, he will get the best results by selling or leasing on a royalty basis to the strongest interests already in the same or the nearest similar field; and it is a very ignorant inventor indeed who does not know who those interests are in his own line. Usually the reason he goes elsewhere is because he has already failed to persuade them of the commercial usefulness of his proposition, or because they will not meet his terms. Sometimes he is afraid they may pirate his idea, and then with their greater resources wear him down in litigation.

The truth is that when an inventor will not or can not place the fruit of his brain with what is called the *trade*,—that is, with the leading manufacturers in his own line,—he enters an uncharted region, where he may be lucky enough to encounter a simple-minded capitalist with ready money and a lack of suspicion, which is most unusual, but where he is far more likely to meet with irresponsible promoters whose only interest in the inventor is to collect an initial fee, on one pretext or another.

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